



Newsletter

20 and 27 September 2026



St Matthew 21 Sept

St Michael and All Angels 29 Sept

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Services for Sunday 20 September 2026 Trinity 16

St Paul's 10am **Presentation Sunday** Lead and preach Rev Andy Smith; guest presenter: Mrs Katie Lavin, Head of School St Paul's Primary School. Followed by pizza and games.

St Andrew's 11am **Holy Communion** preside and preach Rev Mike Dyson

Services for Sunday 27 September 2026 Trinity 17

St Paul's 10am **Holy Baptism** lead and preach Rev Mike Dyson

St Andrew's 11am **Morning Praise** lead and preach Anthea Darlington (paper service sheets)

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Readings for Sun 20 Sept (A)

Exodus 16: 2-15 (1) *Bread from heaven*

Matthew 20: 1-16 (2) *The labourers in the vineyard*

Readings for Sun 27 Sept

Exodus 17: 1-7 (3) *Water from the rock*

Matt 21: 23-32 (4) *By what authority?*

Wed 23 Sept: Ps 119:105-112; Luke 9: 1-6 Wed 30 Sept: Ps 88: 1-6,11; Luke 9: 57-end

Continuing to celebrate Heritage Open Days weekend, here's the second part of a short **history of St Paul's**. At about 6:00p.m. on Saturday 31st January 1987, an arson attack destroyed almost 135 years of history at St Paul's. The water and heat wrecked whatever was untouched by the fire. The roof was destroyed and pews ruined. Much of the stained glass was shattered and some organ pipes melted. The bell, weighing nearly a ton, crashed down through the tower; the stone font standing directly below it was shattered. Externally the building looked



remarkably untouched, but internally it was a wreck and it was no longer safe.

Extensive remedial work took place over the next 4 years, during which we worshipped in St Paul's school hall. The rector and members of the PCC team initially had thoughts of demolishing the building and starting again with a modern church, but the insurance money wouldn't run to that. It was decided to rebuild the church within the existing walls but to create a modern, flexible space to serve the whole community. The tower and spire were tackled first, a huge steel collar being fixed to keep them standing. The clerestory was removed, thus lowering the roof which now sweeps downward, balanced by the

height of the tower and spire, and the ceiling, now beautiful pitch pine with excellent acoustics in the worship area. Internally the building was divided in two to provide a worship area at the east end and a social area with a mezzanine floor. The existing kitchen and Harrison Room were refurbished; any remaining steps were removed and the building was carpeted. All the brass was cleaned and moved to the chancel at the expense of Tom Cussons. External organ pipes were replaced with artificial pipes in a wooden surround, with a new moveable computerised organ console. Gargoyles, removed when the roof was lowered, and one of the clerestory windows, are now fixed high in the wall dividing the worship and social areas. The rose window was taken from above the chancel arch and now lies at the front of the building where it is the focus of the memorial garden for ashes burials. Figures from the original Ramsbottom windows are now preserved in the north transept window whilst in the south transept there is a new

window commemorating the fire and rebuilding. The church was reopened and rededicated on 16 May 1991 by Rt Rev Stanley Booth Clibborn, Bishop of Manchester, who worshipped regularly in the church with his family and was the first person to arrive to give his condolences the morning after the fire. Since then, in 2008 the Youth Room has been painted with murals designed by the young people of the church, screens installed to show the services and a



programme of maintenance begun- many thanks to our Buildings Group. Bishop Nigel McCullough visited in 2013 as part of his 'Run the Race' pilgrimage round every church in the diocese. Covid meant the building was closed for a while and we worshipped on Zoom. We lost some congregation members but most returned as soon as we could worship in the church again. New boilers were installed in 2023 and the Harrison

Room has recently been repainted. In January we will remember the 40th anniversary of the fire and all that has been achieved since the refurbishment of the church. After 174 years of history it is still here at the heart of the community. Long may it continue. *Anthea Darlington*



Our Prayers. We pray for Tracy Beattie on the loss of her sister and Stewart Gordon on the death of his niece. Please keep Tracy Kehoe, Maureen Roberts, Flo Eccles and Sandra Muir in your prayers. We pray for our school and colleges as pupils and students settle into the new term, especially Tino Dangare and Matty Robinson as they start university. Help yourselves to a copy of Rev Steve Williams' daily prayer diary available at St Paul's. Please pray for **Davina Heyhoe** who was authorised as our parish **ALM for Ecology and creation** at Manchester Cathedral on 19 September.

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Thankyou to everyone who visited St Paul's or came to help over Heritage Open Days: a number of messages of thanks have been received. It was lovely to share our history in words and pictures with visitors, Time Out members and members of our congregation on Sunday morning.



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Monthly fundraising and social event programme update

October: Stewardship campaign St Paul's 4,11,15,18 October; St Andrew's 4,11,15 October

November: Christmas wreath-making with Lorraine P with soup and roll pm Sunday 29 Nov- details later. **December: Christmas events and services** -flyers available soon.

Shoeboxes: items still needed include **soap, razors, toothpaste and tealights**- see Eileen

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Details of Other Services and Events for the next 2 weeks

Tue 22 Sept: St Paul's Time Out 1.30pm racing event- wear a hat!

Wed 23 Sept: St P 10am **Holy Communion** with Rev David Cooper Misson Community lead

Wed 23 Sept: Macmillan Coffee Morning St Paul's Social Area 11am

Mon 28 Sept: PCC meeting 7pm at St Paul's

Tue 29 Sept: Bible Study 7pm 5 Moorside Road

Wed 30 Sept: St Paul's 10am **Holy Communion** with Rev Mike Dyson

Thur 1 Oct: Home group 7pm 47 Agecroft Road

Friday 2 Oct: St Paul's School Harvest festival 9.30am in school – all welcome

CONTACT INFORMATION

Current Clergy Team:

Revd Mike Dyson (Associate Minister)

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Revd Andy Smith (Associate Priest)

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For more information visit our websites:

St Paul's: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15877

St Andrew's: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15878

All other needs:

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